



LOUISVILLE
master**chorale**

CHORAL FIREWORKS



Sunday, November 10, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC CHURCH

November 10, 2019

Dear Friends:

Today we open our ninth season! We are very grateful to our faithful audiences who have enabled us to present so many wonderful oratorios and other outstanding choral/orchestral works from seven centuries. You may think of this concert as our opportunity to thank you by providing you with encores of your favorites from both those centuries and our seasons.

Like you, I have often wanted to just stop the music and play it again before continuing on—but that wouldn't have worked. Instead, today we're, in effect, just going to do encores. For this concert of Choral Fireworks, we've chosen choruses and related solo works across a broad range of composers and styles. What brings them together is that they are all time-honored favorites. The program this afternoon is widely varied—from Haydn to Rossini, Bach to Mendelssohn, Haydn to Brahms and Beethoven. Dr. Millard Dunn's program notes and Dr. John R. Hale's pre-concert lecture weave them together while celebrating each movement's special qualities.

Thank you again for your support today and over the years. We look forward to delighting you with our two additional subscription concerts later in the season: Vivaldi, Mozart, and Bach in February—featuring the magnificent Kyrie and Gloria of Bach's B minor Mass – and a celebration of our American musical heritage in May. But today, watch out for our Choral Fireworks!

Thank you,



Mark Walker
Artistic Director

CHORAL FIREWORKS

OVERTURE: ADAGIO *From Royal Fireworks* G.F. Handel

HALLELUJAH *From Messiah* G.F. Handel

WACHET AUF (Movement IV) *From Cantata 140* J.S. Bach

DIES IRAE
CONFUTATIS
LACRYMOSA
From Requiem W.A. Mozart

CHAOS
IN THE BEGINNING
THE MARVELOUS WORK
THE HEAVENS ARE TELLING
From The Creation F.J. Haydn
Jennifer Trentham, Bill Coleman, and Alexander Redden, soloists

HALLELUJAH *From Christ on the Mount of Olives* L. Beethoven

INFLAMMATUS *From Stabat Mater* G. Rossini
Jennifer Trentham, soloist

HOW LOVELY ARE THE MESSENGERS *From St. Paul* F. Mendelssohn

LORD, MAKE ME KNOW MY END
HOW LOVELY IS THY DWELLING PLACE
From German Requiem J. Brahms
Alexander Redden, soloist

WORTHY IS THE LAMB
AMEN
From Messiah G. F. Handel

Sunday, November 10, 2019
HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC CHURCH



The Kentucky Arts Council, the state arts agency, provides operating support to Louisville Master Chorale with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.



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PRECONCERT PROGRAM



Dr. John R. Hale is the Director of Liberal Studies and Adjunct Professor of Archaeology at the University of Louisville. Dr. Hale is a graduate of Yale University, with a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, and is both a distinguished instructor and author. His many awards include the Panhellenic Teacher of the Year Award and the Delphi Center Award. Professor Hale has published reports on his research in *Antiquity*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, *Scientific American*, and other journals; and his fieldwork has been featured in documentaries on the Discovery and History channels. When his first book, *Lords of the Sea: The Epic Story of the Athenian Navy and the Birth of Democracy*, was published in 2009, *The New York Times* reviewer called him “an intellectually serious historian who knows how to tell war stories.” His engaging style and commanding knowledge are appreciated by concertgoers throughout our community.

TEXT:

HANDEL

Chorus, “Hallelujah,” from Messiah

Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.
(Revelation 19: 6)

The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord,
and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.
(Revelation 11: 15)

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.
(Revelation 19: 16)

Hallelujah

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

BWV 140, no. 4

Zion hört die Wächter singen,
Das Herz tut ihr vor Freuden springen,
Sie wachet und steht eilend auf.
Ihr Freund kommt vom Himmel prächtig,
Von Gnaden stark, von Wahrheit mächtig,
Ihr Licht wird hell, ihr Stern geht auf.

Nun komm, du werthe Kron,
Herr Jesu, Gottes Sohn!
Hosianna!
Wir folgen all
Zum Freudensaal
Und halten mit das Abendmahl.

Zion hears the watchmen sing,
her heart leaps for joy,
she awakes and gets up in haste.
Her friend comes from heaven in his splendor,
strong in mercy, mighty in truth.
Her light becomes bright, her star rises.

Now come, you worthy crown,
Lord Jesus, God's son!
Hosanna!
We all follow
to the hall of joy
and share in the Lord's supper.

MOZART

Requiem

No. 2 Dies irae

Dies irae
Dies illa
Solvat saeculum in favilla
Teste David cum Sybilla

Quantus tremor est futurus
Quando iudex est venturus
Cuncta stricte discussurus

Day of wrath,
That day
Everything will be ashes
Like David and Sybil announced.

What a terror it will be,
When the Judge will come
To judge us all harshly.

No. 6 Confutatis

Confutatis, maledictis
Flammis acribus addictis.
Voca me cum benedictis!

Oro supplex et acclinis
Cor contritum quasi cinis
Gere curam mei finis!

When the accursed have been condemned
And doomed to the searing flames,
Summon me with the saved.

Suppliant and prostrate, I entreat you,
My heart as spent as ashes,
Have care for my fate.

No. 7 Lacrymosa

Lacrymosa dies illa
Qua resurget ex favilla
Judicandus homo reus.
Huic ergo parce Deus.
Pie Jesu Domine!
Dona eis requiem!
Amen!

Mournful that day,
When from the ashes shall rise
a guilty man to be judged.
Lord, have mercy on him.
Gentle Lord Jesus,
grant them eternal rest.
Amen.

HAYDN

From The Creation

“Chaos,” *Orchestral Prelude: The Representation of Chaos*

“In the Beginning,” *Recitative and Chorus*

RAPHAEL

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

CHORUS

And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; and God said:
Let there be Light, and there was Light.

URIEL

And God saw the Light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness

“The Marvelous Work,” *Solo and Chorus*

GABRIEL

The marv'Ilous work beholds amaz'd the glorious hierarchy of heav'n, and from
th'etereal vaults resounds the praise of God, and of the second day.

CHORUS

And from th' ethereal vaults resounds the praise of God, and of the second day.

The Heavens Are Telling the Glory of God

CHORUS

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
the wonder of his works
displays the firmament.

BEETHOVEN

“Hallelujah” from The Mount of Olives

Hallelujah! unto God's Almighty Son.
Praise the Lord, ye bright angelic choirs,
In holy songs of joy.
Man, proclaim His grace and glory!
Hallelujah! unto God's Almighty Son.
Praise the Lord in holy songs of joy.

ROSSINI

“Inflammatu” from Stabat Mater

Inflammatu et accensus,
per te, Virgo, sim defensu
in die iudicii.

Fac me cruce custodiri
Morte Christi praemuniri
Confoveri gratia.

Inflamed and set on fire,
may I be defended by you, Virgin,
on the day of judgement.

Let me be guarded by the cross,
strengthened by the death of Christ,
cherished by grace.

MENDELSSOHN

“How Lovely are the Messengers” from St. Paul

How lovely are the Messengers that preach us the gospel of Peace.
To all the nations is gone forth the sound of their words.
To all the nations is gone forth the sound of their words,
Throughout all the lands their glad tidings.
How lovely are the Messengers that preach us the gospel of Peace.
Isaiah 52 v. 7

BRAHMS

From A German Requiem

“Lord, Make Me to Know”

Lord, make me to know the measure of my days on earth, to consider my frailty, that I must perish.
Surely, all my days here are as an handbreadth to Thee, and my lifetime is as naught to Thee.
Verily, mankind walketh in a vain show, and their best state is vanity.
Man passeth away like a shadow, he is disquieted in vain, he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall
gather them.
Now, Lord, O, what do I wait for? My hope is in Thee.
But the righteous souls are in the hand of God, nor pain nor grief shall nigh them come.

“How Lovely is Thy Dwelling Place”

How lovely is Thy dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts!
For my soul, it longeth, yea, fainteth for the courts of the Lord;
My soul and body crieth out, yea, for the living God.
Blest are they that dwell within Thy house; they praise Thy name evermore.

HANDEL

“Worthy is the Lamb” from Messiah, Part III

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood,
to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength,
and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing and honour, glory and power, be unto Him
that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb,
for ever and ever.

Amen. (Revelation 5: 12-14)

ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Jack Griffin
Isabella Christensen
Ray Weaver
Elizabeth Smith

VIOLIN II

Becca Neeley
Lydia Mercer
Misaki Hall

VIOLA

Meghan Casper
Laura De St Croix

CELLO

Lindy Tsai

BASS

Karl Olson

FLUTE

Kathy Karr
Jana Flygstad

OBOE

Katherine Alberts
Jane Drummond

CLARINET

Andrea Levine
Marilyn Nije

BASSOON

Matthew Karr
Francisco Joubert
Bernard

FRENCH HORN

Jon Gustley
Diana Morgen

TRUMPET

Stacy Simpson
Alex Schwarz

TROMBONE

Brett Shuster
Donna Parkes

TIMPANI

John Harris

LOUISVILLE MASTER CHORALE

SOPRANO

Conra Cowart
Marilyn Cross
Laura Lea Duckworth
Nancy Morris
Viki Perry
Randy Peters
Miriam Pittenger
Mary Redden
Stephanie Smith
Tami Stoecker
Diane Watkins
Abbey Wilkinson
Laura L. H Williams
Ruth J. Wright

ALTO

Nancy Appelfhof
Theresa Bauer
Ashley Cook
Anne-Karrick Deetsch
Carole Dunn
Barbara Ellis
Jeanne Marie Groene
Julie Nichelson
Nancy Nikfarjam
Kathleen Regneri
Marsha Roberts
Shiela Wallace
Elizabeth Weaver
Brenda Weeks
Judith Youngblood

TENOR

Rob Carlson
Bill Coleman
Millard Dunn
Jackson Harmeyer
James Layton
Gregg Rochman
Jonathan Smith
Michael Svendsen
Claude Wise

BASS

Louie Bailey
Daniel Blankenship
Matthew Feldman
John R. Hale
Rob Lane
John O'Neil
Laurence Pittenger
Alexander Redden
Hans Sander
William Schauf
Lewis Washington

ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP



MARK WALKER, Louisville Master Chorale's Conductor and Artistic Director, has extensive experience in Choral Conducting, Organ Performance, Choral Music Education, and Liturgical Church Music. He currently serves as Director of Music and Organist at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in nearby La Grange, Kentucky. He has served parishes in Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, and North Carolina and has taught in schools in Kentucky and North Carolina. Walker has a Bachelor's Degree in Music from Western Kentucky University and a Master's Degree in Organ Performance from East Carolina University.

His conducting experience with extended choral-orchestral works includes the works of Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Vaughan Williams, Vivaldi, Rheinberger, Pergolesi and contemporary composers Tavener, Lauridsen, Paulus, and Rutter. As an organ recitalist, Walker has performed extensively throughout the Eastern and Southern U.S. He currently serves regularly as conductor and organist for various Diocesan events in Louisville, and during the summer of 2011 served as both choral conductor and guest organ recitalist for the National Associations of Pastoral Musicians Conference. He also served as Dean of the Louisville Chapter of the American Guild of Organists in 2011-13.



JACK GRIFFIN is Concertmaster and Production Manager with the Louisville Master Chorale. He has held the Principal Viola position with the Louisville Orchestra since 1984, having joined the Orchestra during high school. He received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Louisville and has also studied at The Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and Indiana University.

Griffin owns Commonwealth Musicians which provides ensembles such as string quartets, jazz ensembles and other musicians for functions such as weddings and corporate events.

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SOLOISTS



JENNIFER POFF, *soprano*, is an accomplished recitalist, performing in this country and abroad. She has also had featured roles on the opera stage from Mozart to Puccini, as well as appearing as soloist in choral masterworks from Messiah to Carmina Burana. In addition to performing, she has a studio for voice students in Louisville. She received her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance at the University of Louisville and her Master of Music and Doctoral coursework at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.



BILL COLEMAN, *tenor*, has performed extensively in the Louisville area in a variety of ensembles including the Cardinal Singers, the Choral Arts Society, the Louisville Bach Society, and the Louisville Chorus. Highlights include performances as soloist in Mozart's Requiem and Schubert's Mass in C with the University of Louisville Honor Choir, Bach's St. Matthew Passion, B-Minor Mass and Monteverdi's Vespers with the Choral Arts Society of Louisville, and Boccherini's Stabat Mater with Louisville's period instrument ensemble Bourbon Baroque. He is a graduate of the University of Louisville.



ALEXANDER REDDEN, *baritone*, is a veteran soloist in and around the greater Louisville area. He has been featured as a soloist with the Louisville Bach Society, Kentucky Opera, Louisville Vocal Project, Louisville Chorus, Louisville Youth Choir, Bellarmine University, the Youth Performing Arts School Choirs, Calvary Episcopal Church and the Stephen Foster Story. He toured Italy with the Louisville Vocal Project, performing concerts in many historic venues including St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Music from Western Kentucky University.

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PROGRAM NOTES

We invite you to explore with us the range of human experience offered by the best choral writing from the Baroque through the early romantic period, from Handel and Bach to Mendelssohn and Brahms, from the heights of exaltation through the depths of heartbreak and grief to peace and quiet joy.

We will begin, however, with an orchestral introduction intended to celebrate the victorious end of a terrible war. The War of the Austrian Succession had involved almost all the countries in Europe, including England, whose war with Spain (The War of Jenkins' Ear, 1739-1748) soon became part of the larger continental war. The Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle (1748), which marked the end of the War of the Austrian Succession, included a provision that the House of Hanover, represented in 1748 by England's George II, would "retain the succession in its German states and in Great Britain." George II wanted to celebrate and commissioned his favorite composer, a native son of Hanover who had become a British subject, to write an orchestral suite that would be part of a large public celebration. Alas, nature rained, literally, on his parade. Many fireworks would not work in the downpour, and the ones that did set the stage on fire. The British public did not hear a performance of the **Royal Fireworks Music** until May 27th, 1749, part of a concert to celebrate the opening of a new Foundling Hospital. Over a thousand people attended, including the prince and princess of Wales. Our concert will begin with the Overture to the Royal Fireworks Music.

George Frideric **Handel** was born in Halle, Germany, in 1685. Despite opposition from his father, he decided to pursue music as a career, and soon became particularly interested in opera, and composing operas. His first was *Almira*, in 1705. Handel was nineteen. In 1706 he travelled to opera's homeland, Italy, and stayed there through three opera seasons. He got to know many Italian musicians and composed Latin motets, Italian cantatas, at least one oratorio, and an opera. (Oratorios were becoming popular in Italy because the church forbade Operas during Lent.)

Handel's first job after Italy was back in Germany: he became Music Director for the Electoral Court of Hanover. However, some of the musicians Handel met spoke highly of the popularity of Italian opera in London. Handel requested a leave of absence to visit London, and after a brief return to Hanover, asked to go back. This request was granted with the stipulation that he would return "within a reasonable time." But while he was there Queen Anne died without issue, and the next person in line was the Elector of Hanover.

In 1726 Handel became a British subject. By this time competition from a second opera company and the waning popularity of Italian opera caused Handel to turn to another format, the oratorio. In 1741 a Prussian diplomat wrote to a friend in Berlin, "... it seems that Europe has abandoned the shores of Albion and we have nothing left but the *Oratorio*, that is, a kind of sacred concert, which Mr. Hendel [sic] occasionally puts on." In fact, Handel's oratorios became wildly popular, in part because they were in English and in part because the middle class could understand and afford them.

By far Handel's best known oratorio is *Messiah*, first performed "in the Fishamble Street Musick Hall, Dublin, at twelve noon on 13 April 1742" (Richard Lockett, *Handel's Messiah: A Celebration*, p. 11. Dublin because Dublin's Lord Lieutenant had commissioned the work.) It was during the first London performance that King George II stood up when the Hallelujah Chorus began.

Messiah is probably the best known, most loved oratorio in the history of Western music, and "Hallelujah" its best known chorus. *Messiah* is divided into three sections, the first dealing with the birth of Christ, the second with his suffering and crucifixion, and the third with events after his death and resurrection. The oratorio is not overtly a narrative, but the librettist Charles Jennens so skillfully chose texts from the King James Bible and the Book of Common Prayer that an attentive listener can deduce the narrative of the piece. "Hallelujah" closes the second section of the oratorio. We will open the choral part of our concert with it. Whereas soloists often represent or speak for individuals, a chorus is made up of and speaks for a community. It speaks to and for all of us. Haydn when he first heard it broke into tears and exclaimed, "He is the master of us all." And with "Hallelujah", no matter why George II stood up, he did, and ever since then the entire audience has stood when it is sung. This rising to our feet makes us all participants in the music, in the celebration of the piece. So let us begin to sing with this joyful work.

"Hallelujah" closes section II of *Messiah* and celebrates the resurrection. We will end our concert with the magnificent "Worthy is the Lamb," which, with its glorious "Amen," closes *Messiah* and allows us to experience for a final time the significance of everything that has gone before it.

When Johann Sebastian **Bach** moved to Leipzig on May 22, 1723, he was facing the most challenging job he had ever held, and the greatest opportunity to fulfill one of his most important dreams: to write a complete annual cycle of church

pieces—mostly cantatas. The church year began on the first Sunday of Advent, the fourth Sunday before Christmas. Counting the special days of Christmas, Easter, and other feast days, he was planning to write sixty or more cantatas a year. At first, of course, he would have to use material he had already written.

He was to be Cantor and Music Director for the principal churches in Leipzig (there were two, St. Thomas and St. Nicholas), he would teach music at the St. Thomas school, and he would plan and direct the music for civic events. Bach held this job until his death, twenty-seven years later. In his obituary Bach's son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, and Bach's student Johann Friedrich Agricola suggested that he might have finished five complete cycles. Scholars have been able to discover the music for only three full cycles, as well as Cantatas that may be part of a lost cycle. The chorus we will sing comes from one of those other Cantatas. It was written for the 27th Sunday after Trinity Sunday in 1731, and since it is rare for there to be twenty-seven Sundays between Trinity Sunday (the first Sunday after Pentecost) and the first Sunday in Advent, it seems likely that BWV 140 was written specifically for the 25th of November, 1731. The cantus firmus, or pre-existing tune that recurs throughout the work, is "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme," written in 1599 by Phillip Nicolai.

From the exaltation of Handel's "Hallelujah" and the excited anticipation of the coming of Christ in Bach's "Zion hört die Wächter singen / das Herz tut ihr vor Freuden springen" we turn to one of the most profound expressions of fear and grief in the face of death: **Mozart's Requiem**. The movie *Amadeus* has brought Mozart and his *Requiem* to the attention of a large audience and also almost completely misrepresented the circumstances of Mozart's writing the *Requiem*. It is true that the commission for the *Requiem* came to Mozart anonymously, but the commission did not come from Antonio Salieri. In fact, while it is true that Mozart and Salieri were bitter rivals, the only connection between Salieri and Mozart's death is that Salieri was among those in the funeral procession who followed Mozart's body from his apartment to St. Steven's Cathedral. The commission came from Franz Count von Walsegg, who intended to claim it for his own and have it played, with him listed as the composer, to honor his recently deceased wife.

Apparently Mozart did begin to believe at some point during his work on the *Requiem* that he was writing it for himself. He died around 1:00 AM on the 5th of December 1791. And on the 10th of December a Requiem Mass for Mozart was held in Vienna's St. Michael's Church at which one or more parts of the unfinished Requiem were sung.

We will sing three movements from the *Requiem*, all of which exist, at least in part, in Mozart's own hand: "Dies Irae," "Confutatis," and "Lacrymosa."

In 1789, Mozart sent out subscription invitations for the next season. Only one came back. H. C. Robbins Landon and David Wyn Jones, **Haydn's** biographers suggest that "the public found the 'dark' side of Mozart's art alarming. . . ." Many of them were "repelled by the grim power of Mozart's demonic side." What drew them to Haydn's music was his "combination of popular language and forms (e.g. the rondo with its catchy returning tune), together with a highly professional approach and a marked bent for intellectual exploitation of the given material."

Between the years of 1791 and 1795 Haydn made two trips to England. The English loved him and his music, particularly his symphonies. When he left England for the last time, J. P. Salomon, his friend and promoter, gave him a libretto he had originally put together for Handel entitled *The Creation*. Haydn was eager to write an oratorio in the tradition of Handel, and when he got home he set to work. The libretto was in English, drawn from the King James version of the Bible and from Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Haydn set the libretto in both English and German, simultaneously.

On his way back to Vienna from England Haydn stopped in Bonn, where he met a young musician who showed great promise. Haydn ended up taking **Beethoven** with him to Vienna where he lived up to Haydn's musical expectations and became Vienna's bad boy at the same time. For his first large choral work, *Christus am Ölberge* (Op. 85) Beethoven chose one of the most dramatic, but at the same time one of the most difficult, moments in the life of Christ: His night in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the Mount of Olives, following what we think of as the Last Supper. It gets intense. But it ends with a triumphant chorus that begins, in German "*Welten singen Dank und Ehre . . .*" Because "*Welten singen*" is metrically equivalent to "Hallelujah" that is how it has been translated and that chorus is known as "Beethoven's Hallelujah!" Perhaps to remind us of another chorus with "Hallelujah" in the title.

Gioachino **Rossini** is probably best known for the overtures to several of his operas (William Tell, The Thieving Magpie, The Barber of Seville). After the overtures are the operas themselves. He wrote his last opera in 1829. He was thirty-seven years old. In 1831, travelling in Spain, he received a commission to set the Stabat Mater. Within a year he had written about half of the work but his health prevented him from completing it. He asked a friend, Giovanni Tadolini, to finish it for him,

but then Rossini passed the completed work as entirely his own. Finally Rossini rewrote Tadolini's part of the score and published the corrected work in 1841, ten years from his original commission.

The Stabat Mater is a Latin poem written during the thirteenth century. Scholars cannot agree on who the author was. The poem became very popular, and in 1727 became a sequence in the mass for the day of the Seven Sorrows of Mary, September 15th. The poem itself is twenty stanzas, each three lines long and rhyming aab (though the b rhyme changes every two or three stanzas). Rossini set the poem in ten movements (the tenth is an Amen). We will sing the eighth movement, a setting of stanzas eighteen and nineteen.

The poem opens with an image of Mary, mother of Jesus, at the foot of the cross as her Son hangs there: "Stabat mater dolorosa / Juxta crucem lacrymosa, / Dum pendebat Filius." It is a heartbreaking image. By the ninth stanza the poem becomes a prayer to the Virgin herself, asking for her intercession on the day of judgement ("in die judicii").

Felix **Mendelssohn** was seven when, on March 21st, 1816, his Jewish parents had their four children baptized by a Reformed Protestant minister. The baptism took place in a private ceremony held in their home, but it meant that the children grew up in a Christian community and never questioned their place in that community. Felix's parent themselves converted in 1822.

This does not mean that Felix was unaware that the roots of anti-Semitism in 19th century Germany were deep, and that for some his conversion and his faithful devotion to Christianity meant nothing. His experience of this anti-Semitism may have influenced his choice when he began considering the story of St. Paul as the subject of his first oratorio: a Jewish persecutor of Christians who experiences a dramatic conversion, becomes an evangelist, and is himself persecuted by the Jews and the Romans.

An early version of *Paulus* was premiered at the Lower Rhine Music Festival in May of 1836. Characteristically Mendelssohn continued to revise the piece until the piano-vocal and full scores were published in 1837. The overture declares the work's Protestant affiliation by opening with an orchestral version of the first bars of "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme." The entire chorale appears later in the work. The first part deals with the martyrdom of Stephen, which is followed by Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus. Saul, now Paul, decides with Barnabus to carry the message of Christ to the Jews and the heathens. The chorus "How lovely are the messengers that preach us the gospel of peace," one of the most popular and most often sung choruses from the oratorio, follows this decision. Paul cures the lame man from Lystra, told here in a recitative. And it's not long before the Jews and the heathens turn against them. The Oratorio ends with a chorus asserting that Paul fought the good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith. The final chorus ends with a prayer: "Praise the Lord my soul, and all that is within me praise his Holy Name."

Several scholars have suggested that Johannes **Brahms** began thinking about a requiem after his good friend Robert Schumann tried to commit suicide by jumping into the Rhine, and his death two years later. From the beginning Brahms intended his Requiem to be something new, not a liturgical requiem but a personal statement. He selected the texts himself from Luther's Bible and the Apocrypha. Throughout, the work focuses not on a Christian afterlife but on consolation for the living in the face of our mortality. One of the most powerful movements is movement three, based on Psalm 39, verses 5 – 8 (verses 4 – 7 in the English Bible) and the first verse from chapter 3 of the Apocryphal book The Wisdom of Solomon ("But the righteous souls are in the hand of God, nor pain nor grief shall nigh them come") A solo bass asks the questions from the psalm that we all ask. The music is powerful even if we don't know German, but hearing the questions in English bring them home to us.

Movement four, which is a setting of Psalm 84, verses 2, 3, and 5 (verses 1, 2, and 4 in the English Bible), is possibly the best known, the most often sung, movement of the work. Brahms said to a friend that any movement of the work could stand on its own. In answer to the question, "Why a *German* requiem?" Brahms answered that if he thought he could get away with it he would have called it *A Human Requiem*. And its great power is that it is so thoroughly human. It also proves that Brahms knew his scripture.

And that brings us back to **Handel**, and the last movement of *Messiah*: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. Amen!"

Program notes by Millard Dunn.

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